

First-Ever Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health Identifies Disparities

The first-ever Surgeon General's report on oral health identifies a "silent epidemic" of dental and oral diseases in some population groups and calls for a national effort to improve oral health.

"During the last 50 years, there have been dramatic improvements in oral health, and most middle-aged and younger Americans expect to retain their natural teeth over their lifetimes," said Surgeon General David Satcher, MD PhD, in presenting the report. "However, this report

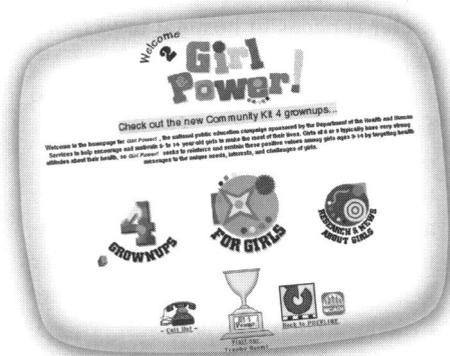
illustrates profound disparities that affect those without the knowledge or resources to achieve good oral care. Those who suffer the worst oral health include poor Americans, especially children and the elderly. Members of racial and ethnic [minority] groups also experience a disproportionate level of oral health problems. And, those with disabilities and complex health conditions are at greater risk for oral diseases that, in turn, further complicate their health."

Dr. Satcher pointed out that among the barriers to oral health is a

general lack of public awareness of its importance. The report stresses that good oral health and general health are inseparable.

Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General recommends raising awareness on the part of the public and policy makers and educating non-dental health professionals about oral health and disease. Also recommended is an expansion of the science base to determine the populations most at risk for serious oral health conditions and faster application of research findings to targeted health prevention approaches.

For more information on Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General, see the website of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research at www.nidcr.nih.gov/sgr/oralhealth.htm. ■



The Girl Power! Community Education Kit, "designed to help coaches, teachers, business leaders, and other caring adults help girls make the most of their lives" is available from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services.

Girl Power! is a national public education campaign to help encourage and motivate 9- to 14-year-old girls.

Girl Power! Education Kit Available

The goals of the Girl Power! campaign are to provide accurate health information and positive messages to girls and their caregivers; to raise public awareness about substance abuse and risky behaviors; to help girls develop the skills they need to resist unhealthy influences and make positive choices; and to support girls and the adults who care about them.

Since its creation in November 1996, the Girl Power! campaign has teamed with nearly 5,000 community-based programs and organizations, 300 local endorsers, and more than 60

national endorsers including the American Association of University Women, the American Medical Association, and the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to promote the Girl Power! message nationwide.

The Girl Power! Community Education Kit can be viewed and downloaded from the Girl Power! website at www.health.org/gpower. Specific components or the entire kit may also be ordered by calling SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 800-729-6686. ■

CDC Spanish-Language Website

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have launched a Spanish-language website at www.cdc.gov/spanish.

The Spanish-language website is not a translation of the English-language website at www.cdc.gov

but offers information specifically tailored to Latina(o) populations in the US. Spanish speakers will find information on a variety of health topics as well as gateways to health information offered by other federal agencies. ■

AHRQ Offers Patient Fact Sheet on Medical Errors

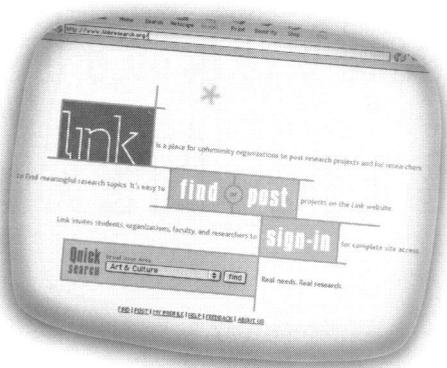
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's two-page fact sheet *20 Tips to Help Prevent Medical Errors* offers general recommendations for consumers, along with specific "tips" focusing on medications, hospital stays, and surgery.

20 Tips to Help Prevent Medical Errors advises consumers that "the single most important way you can help to prevent errors is to be an active member of your health care team."

The free fact sheet is available from AHRQ's Publications Clearinghouse; tel. 800-358-9295 (ask for AHRQ publication number 00-P038). Or view it on AHRQ's website; see www.ahrq.gov/consumer/20tips.htm. ■

Website Links Community Agencies, Researchers

LINK (www.linkresearch.org) is a free Internet service introducing nonprofit agencies to graduate, professional, and college students looking for research topics. Established with support from the Packard Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the Markle Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Stanford University School of Law, and private donors, LINK proposes to "assist nonprofit organizations and public agencies in their efforts to



integrate strategic research, planning, and project evaluation into their work." ■

Report to Congress on International Child Labor

The Department of Labor's latest report to Congress on international child labor, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children: Volume VI: An Economic Consideration of Child Labor*, was released in May 2000. This sixth report in a series examines the economic benefits of eliminating child labor and increasing school enrollment.

The report focuses its analysis on employment that prevents children from obtaining the benefits of primary education. The report recognizes the correlation between financial poverty and child labor, but also emphasizes that many children work because their opportunities to enroll in



school are limited. The report emphasizes that a key to eliminating child labor is broadening the opportunities available to children and their families.

Copies of Volume VI and the earlier reports are available from the Department of Labor's International Child Labor Program; tel. 202-208-4843; fax 202-219-4923. The full report is also available in PDF format on the Web at www2.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/media/reports/iclp/sweat6/overview.htm. ■